



1 HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, Shelby Foote was born on November 17, 1916, in  
3 Greenville, Mississippi, the cultural center of the  
4 Mississippi Delta; he was the only child of Shelby Dade Foote,  
5 a local businessman, whose roots ran deep in American history,  
6 and Lillian Rosenstock Foote; and

7 WHEREAS, Under the influence of William Alexander Percy, a  
8 local author and the uncle of young Shelby's best friend,  
9 Walker Percy, young Shelby took to books, discovering abiding  
10 favorites from Shakespeare to Dickens; and

11 WHEREAS, At the University of North Carolina at Chapel  
12 Hill, Mr. Foote wrote short stories and poems for the campus  
13 literary magazine before dropping out in 1937 without taking a  
14 degree; he did find occasion, with Walker Percy, to visit  
15 William Faulkner in Oxford, Mississippi; and

16 WHEREAS, In 1940 Mr. Foote entered the United States Army  
17 and served as a battery captain of field artillery in Europe  
18 before his Army career ended in 1944; and

19 WHEREAS, Following his military service, Mr. Foote found  
20 odd jobs, including a stint as a reporter for The Delta  
21 Democrat Times; and

22 WHEREAS, In 1946, he sold his first short story to The  
23 Saturday Evening Post, and after rejections and rewrites, he  
24 sold his first novel, "Tournament", to Dial Press; and

25 WHEREAS, Mr. Foote would go on to write five more novels,  
26 including "Follow Me Down" (1950), "Love in a Dry Season"  
27 (1951), "Shiloh" (1952), "Jordan County" (1954), and  
28 "September, September" (1978), all of which were set in the  
29 South; and

1           WHEREAS, Mr. Foote's 89 cameo appearances in Ken Burns's  
2           PBS series "The Civil War" in 1990 were informed by his own  
3           three-volume history of the war, two decades in the making,  
4           that blended his practiced novelist's touch with precise, but  
5           defiantly un-footnoted research; and

6           WHEREAS, In 1999, the Modern Library ranked Mr. Foote's  
7           "The Civil War: A Narrative" as No. 15 on its list of the  
8           century's 100 best English-language works of nonfiction; and

9           WHEREAS, Shelby Foote, a great American Civil War  
10          historian, passed away at the age of 88 in Memphis, Tennessee,  
11          on June 27, 2005; and

12          WHEREAS, Mr. Foote is survived by his wife, Gwyn; his  
13          daughter, Margaret; and his son, Huger Lee; therefore, be it

14          RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE  
15          NINETY-FOURTH GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that  
16          the citizens of Illinois celebrate the life and literary gifts  
17          of one of the most prominent Civil War novelists of all time;  
18          and be it further

19          RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be  
20          presented to Mr. Foote's family with our deepest sympathies and  
21          highest esteem.